



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
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**2020 CENSUS PROGRAM MEMORANDUM SERIES: 2021.17**

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**MEMORANDUM FOR:** The Record

**From:** Albert E. Fontenot, Jr. **(Signed September 28, 2021)**  
Associate Director, Decennial Census Programs

**Subject:** Updates to the Evaluations and Experiments Operation

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This memorandum documents changes to the Evaluations and Experiments operation (EAE) since the release of the [EAE Detailed Operational Plan](#) on September 23, 2019. The updates for this operation consist of changes to the set of evaluations and experiments to be performed using data collected during the 2020 Census. Since baselining the Detailed Operational Plan (DOP), seven evaluations were added to the program. Because of the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Evaluating the Effect of the Decennial Census on Self Response to the American Community Survey (ACS) was cancelled.

The updated list of Evaluations and Experiments is shown below. This replaces Table 1 in the Detailed Operational Plan, which begins on page 6.

2020 Census Evaluations	Description
Administrative Record Dual System Estimation	Purpose: To study if dual system estimates could be generated without conducting an independent post-enumeration survey (PES). The census would continue to serve as the first source, but administrative records would serve as the second source, rather than PES results.

2020 Census Evaluations	Description
Analysis of Census Internet Self-Response Paradata by Language	Purpose: To study paradata from the internet self-response instrument to learn about issues associated with language. 2020 Census system/operation interactions include access to paradata and response data from internet self-response instruments from the 2017 Census Test the 2018 End-to-End Census Test and the 2020 Census.
Evaluating Privacy and Confidentiality Concerns of Complete and Partial Respondents	Purpose: To assess respondents' privacy and confidentiality concerns about responding to the census generally, as well as assessing concerns of certain types of respondents with a follow-up questionnaire. Experimental treatments and data collection include a telephone follow-up with self-respondents and in-person follow-up with Nonresponse Followup (NRFU) respondents. 2020 Census systems/operation interactions include access to response data for sample selection.
Group Quarters Advance Contact (GQAC): Refining Classification of College or University Student Housing	Purpose: In the 2020 Census GQAC, enumerators will classify college or university student housing as university owned (GQ type code 501) versus privately owned (GQ Type code 502). This is exploratory research to determine whether the refined classification results in more accurately identifying privately owned college housing for the GQ universe instead of the housing unit universe.

2020 Census Evaluations	Description
Reengineered Address Canvassing	Purpose: To evaluate the redesign of the Address Canvassing operation, including the use of in-office address canvassing and interactive review. Experimental treatments and data collection include use of “salted” and “suppressed” addresses to measure error in field canvassing. 2020 Census systems/operation interactions include the Address Canvassing operation having “salted” and “suppressed” addresses (transparent to enumerators); and system support from the Decennial Information Technology Division and Geography Division.
Research on Hard to Count Populations: Non-English Speakers and Complex Household Residents, including Young Children	Purpose: To conduct both an evaluation and an experimental research project about hard-to-count populations such as non-English speakers and complex household residents. Experimental treatments and data collection include NRFU observations and respondent debriefings and bilingual enumerator training experiment. 2020 Census system/operation interactions include the NRFU operation: observations and doorstep debriefings; special training module for bilingual enumerators and for Learning Management System; and development and deployment of the bilingual training module.
The Undercount of Young Children: A Qualitative Evaluation of Census Materials and Operations	Purpose: To explore reasons for the undercount of young children. Experimental treatments and data collection include focus groups and cognitive interviews.

2020 Census Evaluations	Description
Evaluating the 2020 Census Communications Campaign: Census Mindset Measures Before and After the Campaign	Purpose: To evaluate the 2020 Census Communications Campaign and to measure whether (and how) mindsets may have shifted over the course of the campaign.
2020 Census Quantitative Creative Testing	Purpose: To test whether 2020 Census television and radio advertisements perform better than control ads that do not mention the 2020 Census on factors including message recall, message comprehension, ad likability and enjoyability, behavioral intention to respond to the census, and the Census Bureau's corporate image.
2020 Census Tracking Survey	Purpose: To track U.S. public sentiment concerning matters that may bear upon 2020 Census participation. Data will optimize the Integrated Partnership and Communications Program's campaign during the enumeration and guide planning prior to its launch.
Investigating Digital Advertising and Online Self-Response	Purpose: To calculate the proportion of in-target submissions and evaluate the accuracy of 2020 Census targeted digital advertising.
Matching 2018 Census Barriers, Attitudes, and Behaviors Study (CBAMS) Survey Sample to 2020 Census	Purpose: To evaluate (1) the relationship between intended response behaviors and actual response behaviors as well as (2) the characteristics of nonresponding CBAMS households. This evaluation will also inform the Census Bureau about respondent, household, and environmental (e.g. neighborhood crime rate) factors related to self-administered survey nonresponse.
Comparing 2019 Census Test and 2020 Census Self-Response Rates to Estimate "Decennial Environment"	Purpose: To match 2019 Census Test data to 2020 Census data and compare self-response behavior with and without the decennial environment.

2020 Census Evaluations	Description
Evaluating Large Technology Platforms – Selected Digital Partnerships	Purpose: To measure the impact from a subset of digital activities conducted by 2020 Census national partners across the 22 National Partnership Program (NPP) portfolios representing different sectors and communities during the 2020 Census self-response campaign. It specifically examines digital partnership activities by the technology platforms.

2020 Census Experiments	Description
Extending the Decennial Census Environment to the Mailing Materials	<p>Purpose: To study the ability to increase self-response by tapping into the unique environment surrounding the decennial census through the materials we use to contact households and request self-enumeration. Experimental treatments and data collection includes a panel (households) to receive a wearable nonmonetary insert (sticker) that promotes the 2020 Census; a panel (households) to receive mailing materials that incorporate elements and images developed by the 2020 Census communications campaign; a panel (geographic area) to receive an every door direct mailer sent on Census Day. 2020 Census system/operation interactions include Control and Response Data System (CaRDS) to manage experimental sample cases (flags); Survey Operational Control System (SOCS) to manage experimental workload (e.g., mailout); National Processing Center (NPC) to manage printing, assembly, and/or mailout of experimental packages; and the commercial print vendor to print some experimental materials.</p>

2020 Census Experiments	Description
Optimization of Self-Response in the 2020 Census	<p>Purpose: To understand the net impacts of the Optimizing Self-Response innovation area in the 2020 Census-the-mailing-strategy-and of the overall influence of the internet response option. Experimental treatments and data collections include a panel to receive the 2010 Census mail strategy (2020 Census questionnaire, no internet option); a panel to receive 2020 Census mail strategy, but without mention of the internet response option; a panel to have their mail strategy switched between Internet First and Internet Choice; and a panel to receive NO mail materials (will go into NRFU if no response received). 2020 Census system/operation interactions include Control and Response Data System (CaRDS) to manage experimental sample cases (flags); Survey Operational Control System (SOCS) to manage experimental workload (e.g., mailouts); NPC to manage printing, assembly, and/or mailout of experimental packages; commercial print vendor to print some experimental materials; and for the NRFU Operation, enumerators need to be trained/prepared for questions from respondents who didn't receive any mail materials.</p>
Real-Time 2020 Administrative Record Census Simulation	<p>Purpose: To conduct an administrative record census in real time in 2020 to show how the population statistics compare between an administrative record census and survey-style collection, in the same time frame; and to show how long it takes to execute an administrative record census, including identifying the most time-consuming parts of the process.</p>

## **The 2020 Census Memorandum Series**

The 2020 Census Memorandum Series documents significant decisions, actions, and accomplishments of the 2020 Census Program for the purpose of informing stakeholders, coordinating interdivisional efforts, and documenting important historical changes.

A memorandum generally will be added to this series for any decision or documentation that meets the following criteria:

1. A major program-level decision that will affect the overall design or have significant effect on 2020 Census operations or systems.
2. A major policy decision or change that will affect the overall design or significantly impact 2020 Census operations or systems.
3. A report that documents the research and testing for 2020 Census operations or systems.

Visit 2020 Census on [Census.gov](https://www.census.gov) to access the Memorandum Series, the 2020 Census Operational Plan, and other information about preparations for the 2020 Census.